



## ALVIN AILEY AMERICAN DANCE THEATER

Press contact: Christopher Zunner

(212) 405-9028 / [czunner@alvinailey.org](mailto:czunner@alvinailey.org)

Ariel Deitch

(212) 405-9088 / [adeitch@alvinailey.org](mailto:adeitch@alvinailey.org)

### AILEYCAMPS MOTIVATE INNER-CITY YOUTH NATIONWIDE THIS SUMMER

#### INNOVATIVE PROGRAM GOES BEYOND DANCE; INSPIRES YOUTH TO BELIEVE IN THEIR UNLIMITED POTENTIAL AND POSSIBILITIES

(New York) June 24, 2010 – AileyCamp will be held at 10 sites throughout the United States this summer, giving over 1,000 inner-city students the opportunity to have a life-changing and meaningful experience. Taking place in 9 cities – Berkeley, CA; Boston, MA; Kansas City, KS; Kansas City, MO; Bridgeport, CT; Chicago, IL; Atlanta, GA; New York, NY (Staten Island and Washington Heights), and Miami, FL., AileyCamp uses the art of dance as a means to stretch the mind, body, and spirit of each camper.

“I will not use the word *can't* to define my possibilities,” is just one of the affirmations repeated daily to reconfirm their goals, build self-confidence, and guide them on a path to becoming productive and motivated individuals.



Photo by Amparo Santiago

Founded by Alvin Ailey and Kansas City Friends of Alvin Ailey in 1989, AileyCamp gives inner-city students ages 11 to 14 a supportive environment to use dance as a vehicle for developing self-esteem, self-discipline, creative expression, and critical-thinking skills.

AileyCamp's six week curriculum offers disciplined dance technique classes – ballet, modern, jazz, and tap – as well as other classes that encourage young people to reach their full potential. For example, the Creative Communications class explores imagination and teaches the campers how to express themselves in a positive way by motivating them to integrate other art disciplines

into their self expression. In addition to a Personal Development class, students also take part in weekly cultural and recreational field-trips so they can learn about and experience some of the creative outlets in the area.

The AileyCamp environment cultivates respect for oneself and others, while positively affecting the lives of participants long after the conclusion of the summer session. “Alvin Ailey recognized that dance could inspire young people in life-changing ways and be an agent in helping them set and achieve goals,” explains Nasha Thomas-Schmitt, National Director of AileyCamp and former member of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater.

“I travel throughout the summer visiting these camps. It’s a joy to see AileyCamp’s positive impact on students all over the country.”

Each AileyCamp has an open house event as well as a final performance, giving students the opportunity to present all that they learned during the summer and to experience the accomplishment and beauty in performing on stage for family and friends. In New York, some of the students are given scholarships to attend The Ailey School and all are given the opportunity to attend with AileyCamp Too, a continuation of the camp on Saturdays during the school year.

This year AileyCamp is already in full swing in Atlanta (June 1 to July 9) and Kansas City, KS and Kansas City, MO (June 14 to July 22); Berkeley, CA (June 21- July 30). Program is scheduled for Washington Heights and Staten Island, NY (July 6 to August 13); Bridgeport, CT (July 5 to August 13); Boston, MA (July 1 to August 5); and Miami, FL and Chicago, IL (June 28 to August 6). Camp tuition, uniforms, dance attire, field trips, breakfast, lunch, and transportation are all provided at no cost to participants.

*Chase is the Ailey organization’s Art of Learning Sponsor.*

*Bloomberg is the sponsor of AileyCamp New York.*

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**About Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater**

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater (AAADT), recognized by U.S. Congressional resolution as a vital American “Cultural Ambassador to the World,” grew from a now-fabled March 1958 performance in New York that changed forever the perception of American dance. Today, led by Judith Jamison, AAADT has performed for an estimated 23 million people in 48 states and in 71 countries on 6 continents, including two historic residencies in South Africa, promoting the uniqueness of the African-American cultural experience and the preservation and enrichment of the American modern dance tradition. Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Inc. is the umbrella organization that includes Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater; Ailey II (1974), a second performing company of emerging young dancers and innovative choreographers; The Ailey School (1969), one of the most extensive dance training programs in the world; Ailey Arts in Education & Community Programs, which brings dance into the classrooms, communities and lives of people of all ages; and The Ailey Extension, a program offering dance and fitness classes to the general public, which began with the opening of Ailey’s permanent home—the nation’s largest building dedicated to dance—named The Joan Weill Center for Dance, at 55<sup>th</sup> Street at 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue in New York City. For more information, visit [www.alvinailey.org](http://www.alvinailey.org).